

CRTC puts an end to locked cellphones and unlocking fees

News Release

From [Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission](#)

Updated Wireless Code gives Canadians more control over their wireless services

June 15, 2017 – Ottawa-Gatineau - Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) today announced that as of December 1, 2017, all individual and small business wireless service customers will have the right to have their cellphones and other mobile devices unlocked free of charge upon request. In addition, all newly purchased devices must be provided unlocked from that day forward.

As well, updates to the trial period will allow customers who are unhappy with their service to cancel their contract within 15 days and return their device in near-new condition at no costs, as long as they have used less than half their monthly usage limits.

The CRTC also clarified certain rules that are already in place under the Wireless Code. For family or shared plans, the account holder must, by default, be the one who consents to data overage and data roaming charges beyond the established caps (\$50 and \$100 per month, respectively). Wireless service providers may, however, allow account holders to authorize other users on a family or shared plan to consent to additional charges. The CRTC also made clear that in all instances, the caps apply on a per account basis, regardless of the number of devices associated with the account. These clarifications apply immediately.

Finally, there were various interpretations of a wireless plan's key terms in the marketplace and the CRTC has clarified that they include voice, text and data services. These terms cannot be unilaterally changed by the service provider during the contract period without the account holder's express consent. These clarifications apply immediately.

Quotes

“The Wireless Code has helped make the wireless market more dynamic to the benefit of Canadians. While they appreciate the Code, they told us loudly and clearly that it could be more effective. We have listened to them. The changes and clarifications we are announcing today will give Canadians additional tools to make informed choices about their wireless services and take advantage of competitive offers in the marketplace.”

- Jean-Pierre Blais, Chairman of the CRTC

Quick Facts

- The Wireless Code is a mandatory code of conduct for providers of retail mobile wireless voice and data services. The CRTC created the Code in 2013 to make it easier for Canadians to understand their mobile contracts, to switch service providers, and to prevent bill shock.
- The Code promotes a dynamic marketplace by empowering Canadians to make informed choices about their wireless services and establishing standards for industry behaviour.
- Canadians should discuss their complaints with the [Commissioner for Complaints for Telecommunications Services](#), who is well placed to help them navigate both the current rules and pending changes.
- To ensure Canadians with disabilities have a reasonable opportunity to test their services, they will be able to use up to 100% of their plan’s voice, text or data during a 30-day extended trial period.
- The CRTC held a public proceeding in which consumer groups, wireless companies, academics, accessibility groups and individual Canadians provided their views on the Wireless Code’s effectiveness. The changes and clarifications announced today result from that input.

Related Products

- [Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2017-200](#)
- [Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2016-293 - Review of the Wireless Code](#)

Associated Links

- [The Wireless Code, simplified](#)
- [Know your rights: What the CRTC’s Wireless Code Means For You \(Infographic\)](#)
- [Checklist: Do You Know Your Rights as a Wireless Consumer?](#)
- [Switch Providers and Keep your Number](#)

- [Wireless Code Public Opinion Research 2016](#)

Contacts

Media Relations
(819) 997-9403

General Inquiries
(819) 997-0313
Toll-free: 1 (877) 249-CRTC (2782)
TTY: (819) 994-0423
[Ask a question or make a complaint](#)

Stay Connected
Follow us on Twitter [@CRTCeng](#)
Like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/crtceng